

Chap. XVIII] GOD'S MORAL GOVERNMENT.

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the spirit over the flesh. He has so designed
the economy
of our life that human character is never
found to enter
into its glory except through the ordeal of
affliction ; that its
force cannot come forth without the offer of
resistance; nor
can the grandeur of its free-will declare
itself except in the
battle of fierce temptations, or except when
the accidents of
birth, breeding or station, when the
tyrannies of heredity
or the necessities of circumstance are
shaken off in the
stress of some great responsibility or in the
storm of some
resistless impulse. Thus, belauded
hypocrites under the
fear of death or the despair of downfall or
the fever of self-
interest have cast off their vain trappings to
show the absolute
meanness of their make. On the other hand,
a Swiss moun-
taineer or the consumptive daughter of a
light-house keeper
achieves immortality by the innate heroism
of the soul.
In God's government of the universe, moral
evil is therefore
the only condition in which the highest, the
most sublime
virtue ever seen among men is possible. The
existence of
moral evil does, however, in no way tell
against His Omni-
potence—His power to prevent evil
prevailing in the world

as will be seen [hereunder](#).

As there can be no virtue or moral good without freedom of choice and as moral good consists in right choosing and choosing itself implies two courses to choose between, we are not denying God's Omnipotence in any real [^sense](#), if we say that He could not both provide for moral goodness in the world and shut out all evil from it. We do not deny His power to have made us mere machines or sentient animals of the lower order, incapable of swerving from His laws; but then such machines or brute animals would have had not the least moral value, not having any moral quality, neither good nor bad—but outside the pale • of virtue, because absolutely [irresponsible](#). But the goodness in man which He has been developing is a goodness which has an infinitely [higher](#) quality than mere *correctness* of action. It is a